



CHAPTER 9

Building a Vietnamese Language Collection with the Vietnamese Diaspora Community in the Neighborhood

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California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), is a Hispanic-Serving Institution and qualifies to be an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution. The CSUF campus is situated in Orange County, California, with the backdrop of “Little Saigon”—the largest Vietnamese diaspora in the world with a sizable network of Vietnamese American entrepreneurs, community leaders, and students. The university’s geographic proximity to this notable Vietnamese cultural epicenter contributes to a

substantial enrollment of Vietnamese heritage students as well as student engagement in Vietnamese course offerings. With a minor in Vietnamese already established several years ago, CSUF has been in the process of developing a Vietnamese degree program, the first of its kind in the United States, that will include a bilingual education certification pathway and extensive training in Vietnamese and Vietnam studies. This book chapter addresses the challenges in growing a language collection at an academic library with a public-facing mission to serve not only the student population but also the local regional community, which in some cases are one and the same. The collections discussions in working directly with one of the communities that is discussed in ethnic studies courses are supplemented by the perspectives of an acquisitions librarian, a teaching faculty member leading the Vietnamese program at CSUF, and a survey of the students enrolled in the Vietnamese courses. These insights will better inform the overall collections strategy necessary to support a new academic program and build a library collection reflective of and responsive to the communities it serves while also enriching our understanding of how to serve a diaspora community through library collections.

Introduction and Backdrop

There are challenges in growing a language-based collection at an academic library with a public-facing mission to serve not only the student population but also the surrounding community, which in some cases are one and the same. California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), established in 1957, is one of the largest institutions among the CSU system and is the only CSU campus serving the very diverse population of Orange County in California. CSUF, along with other sister institutions, were integrated into the California State University (CSU) system as part of the Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960 and the California Master Plan for Higher Education of 1960,¹ which defined the roles for California's postsecondary education systems. At the time of writing, the CSUs are a network of twenty-three universities across the state of California working together to focus on undergraduate and graduate education in the liberal arts and sciences and applied fields. As a public higher education entity largely funded through a mixture of state funds and student tuition fees, CSUs have a strong public-facing mission "to provide public services that enrich the university and its communities."²

Each campus as part of this dynamic public higher education enterprise embraces this mission and is integrated into local and regional partnerships. In the over sixty years since CSUF's founding, the number of students at the CSUF campus has grown to around 40,000 by the 2019–2020 academic year with 109 degree programs offered in 2021—55 undergraduate and 54 (mostly master's level) graduate programs.³ The Orange County area, where CSUF is located, has similarly witnessed a major population boom and demographic shift. Orange County has one of the highest concentrations of Asians

in the nation. According to the US Census's ACS 2019 1-year report online, 21.2 percent of Orange County residents were Asian alone, revealing a significant leap from the 1950 US Census, where the "non-white" Orange County population was reported to be only 1.2 percent, with Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders included in this category.⁴ The changing student population on campus corresponded with Orange County's demographic shift. CSUF, currently designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, also qualifies to be an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPI) Serving Institution based on the student population the campus serves.⁵ This eligibility indicates that the campus at the time of assessment had an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent AANAPI, and by fall of 2020, 20.7 percent of CSUF students were Asian alone.⁶

The interwoven education landscape as well as the regional population set the backdrop for CSUF's Vietnamese program. One of CSUF's neighbors in Orange County is "Little Saigon"—the largest Vietnamese diaspora in the nation, consisting of an extensive network of Vietnamese American entrepreneurs, community leaders, and students.⁷ Given CSUF's geographic proximity to Little Saigon, a Vietnamese cultural epicenter outside of Vietnam, there was consistently high enrollment in Vietnamese course offerings, and past campus surveys indicated student interest in a formalized Vietnamese program. In response to the changing student demographics and student interest, and anticipating the need for Vietnamese language speakers in the region, a Vietnamese minor was approved in 2013, and there is an aim to build a major degree program in the future.

Since 1994, CSUF has been offering Vietnamese language instruction through the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures (MLL). VIET 101 and 102 courses were available for beginning-level students, and the course list was expanded to include VIET 201 and 202 for heritage Vietnamese speakers in order to meet local and community demands. With the creation of the Vietnamese minor, upper-division courses were added for interdisciplinary understanding of Vietnam, its people, language, and culture, and course enrollment ranges from thirteen to thirty students. The rapid growth of the Vietnamese community in the region has provided a stable Vietnamese-speaking population that requires services and reciprocally attracts students to the program wanting to expand their engagement with the Vietnamese community locally and globally. Dr. Linh Nguyen, one of the coauthors of this chapter, was hired in 2016 to lead the Vietnamese program at CSUF. Although the Vietnamese program is not part of ethnic studies, it was envisioned as a complement to Asian American Studies course offerings. The Vietnamese program provides the language instruction, while the Asian American Studies program provides the subject content. Furthermore, the Vietnamese program partners with the College of Education at Fullerton to allow graduates with the Vietnamese minor and teaching credentials to become bilingual K–12 teachers in California, where the need for teaching through bilingual immersion programs has been steadily on the rise.

With every new academic program at CSUF, there is a proposal process that circulates through the departments whose partnerships are essential. The campus stakeholders review and assess the level of support and resources needed to actualize new endeavors. When the Vietnamese program proposal was received at CSUF's Pollak Library, the

introduction of a new language program surfaced larger concerns about the role of an academic library at a comprehensive university serving a highly specialized need without the collections budget to adequately support the program's ambitions. The challenges of acquiring Vietnamese language materials, especially when there are competing funding priorities with other, already established language programs on campus, remain a difficult task for the Pollak Library.

Literature Review

There is fairly limited research on the building of library collections to support new academic programs in foreign languages. Sinha and Tucker's 2005 article has a rubric on how to begin a collections assessment to respond to new program proposals and offers a set of guidelines and a template while taking into consideration the potential costs due to increased resource sharing and inflation.⁸ Bobal, Mellinger, and Avery supplement the body of literature for new programs by adding dimensions, such as consortial resource sharing, information literacy, institutional repositories, and open access as services in lieu of increased funding to directly support the collection development of new proposals.⁹ Masuchika's 2012 article proposed a quantitative method to collection development for a new minor in Asian American Studies at the Pennsylvania State University Libraries by identifying comparable institutions, assessing the Asian American studies' courses as well as faculty profiles at the comparable institutions to understand future directions of the field, and utilizing the comparable institutions' collections as benchmarks in relation to Penn State Libraries' collection in this area. As Masuchika noted, this approach could be a useful way to evaluate the "fitness" of existing resources in the collection while aiding decision-making, but the indicators must be carefully selected for the tool to be useful.¹⁰ The works mentioned reference ways of collecting that focus heavily on North American and English language materials.

For developing non-English language materials, there has been some coordination at the Association of American Universities and Association of Research Libraries level, with sustained efforts at research institutions, but these initiatives' significance is access through distributed resource sharing networks and would not mediate the need for building local collections for ready access.¹¹ Numerous articles enumerate the benefits of hiring language specialists to solve operational needs at the point of selection; ordering, cataloging, and processing to facilitate efficiency and informed access to multilingual resources; or partnering with vendors for services.¹² One article focuses specifically on building a Vietnamese collection to serve the Vietnamese community at the Denver Public Library (DPL) and serves as a model for identifying the need, finding funding, and commitment to building a responsive collection that reflects the needs of the community the library is a part of.¹³ But overall, most academic libraries are building new collections to support new disciplines and subjects of inquiry and are usually not starting a brand-new language collection development program, as the trend in many American universities reflects decreased student enrollment in foreign language courses and reduced foreign language

programs.¹⁴ Therefore, it is hardly surprising to witness such scarcity or silence on the topic of building foreign language collections in modern academic libraries with any currency.

CSUF Context

At the Pollak Library, the collection development librarian collaborates with the subject liaison librarians, who select materials to be added to the library's collection in their subject areas of expertise and the academic departments; the acquisitions librarian coordinates with vendors to determine sourcing options and the impact on technical services operations. During the initial needs assessment for the Vietnamese program, the Pollak Library already had access to English-language holdings on some Vietnamese studies topics covering various aspects of culture, history, economy, and anthropology. Despite having a flat budget, the Fullerton campus benefitted from consortial packages with Vietnamese subject area content coordinated system-wide throughout the CSUs. But it was evident that there was a clear deficit in Vietnamese language and literature materials to support a curriculum teaching the language. The Pollak Library previously had not actively collected Vietnamese language or literature materials because there was not a strong curricular need nor the Vietnamese language expertise in the library to develop such a collection. To continue forward with a Vietnamese language component would require close collaboration with the teaching faculty to guide the library's collection development needs in direct support of the courses and occasional assistance to purchase materials from Vietnamese-speaking vendors. In cases where the existing collection does not support the needs of faculty and students, the hope is to build a cooperative, like the Korean Collections Consortium of North America,¹⁵ and rely on resource lending libraries with more developed collections than CSUF, whose collection is still in its infancy.

Unlike research institutions that attempt to collect comprehensively in chosen areas and operate as institutional repositories, CSUF has a mission that is focused on teaching, and the library's collection development is driven by resources that have demonstrable value for its students and teaching. The collecting needs reflect this ethos and are significantly different from those of research and collecting libraries. Many research libraries through legacy practices have separate funds set aside for area, global, or international studies collections. At CSUF, the one-time allocations for firm ordering are divided strictly by subject allocations, and in the case of Vietnamese language materials, the funding comes from a single pot of money for MLL's one-time allocations that take the degree level into consideration. With the Vietnamese program currently being a minor at the undergraduate level, it would receive less funding than the Spanish program, for example, which offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees. The funding allocation formula as well as the initial seed grants to start the collection are discussed in *Asian American Librarians and Library Services: Activism, Collaboration, and Strategies*.¹⁶ There have been discussions about altering the MLL allocation formula to rotate the funding to prioritize different languages each year, but due to the unpredictability of frontlist Vietnamese titles becoming out-of-print and the infrequent rate of reprinting of Vietnamese materials, there would

not be immediate benefits to supporting a growing program nor sustaining established language collections.

Acquiring foreign language materials is different from English language purchasing because it is essential to find the right website, vendors, or both. Translation tools can take an ordering operator up to a certain point, so unless there is a language specialist on staff, it becomes important to collaborate with faculty to get their feedback. Some of these challenges are compounded by the local situation at the Pollak Library, where there is no Vietnamese language nor subject expertise in the library nor any dedicated library liaison to the Vietnamese program. Rather, there is a single library liaison for the entire MLL department.

Vietnamese language materials published in Vietnam pose particular challenges due to the government controlling the press, with the additional possibilities for moderation when it comes to publishing due to censorship, recalls, or post-publication bans on topics deemed sensitive or controversial. Limited print runs can also make it difficult to acquire materials as resources can quickly become unavailable. In 2001, it was estimated that “print runs of material can be as little as 300 copies (although 500–1,000 is more usual),”¹⁷ and by 2016, the normal “first printing of a new title will average from only 1000 up to 3000 copies per title” in Vietnam.¹⁸ However, the advantage of having Little Saigon only ten miles away from the CSUF campus meant the Pollak Library was able to activate its regional networks to partner with a local vendor, TỰ LỰC Bookstore, which supplies Vietnamese materials to institutions nationally and internationally.¹⁹ Although it is still not possible to get everything from this vendor, the benefit of working with a vendor that offsets the labor for customs and logistics has been worthwhile. If this program grows, there might be a need to set up an exchange program in the future, but partnering with the faculty as well as a local vendor has been key in developing the Vietnamese collection so far.

Vietnamese Collection at CSUF

An attempt to analyze the Vietnamese language collection at the Pollak Library requires an initial explanation about the library systems used to manage the collection. Prior to the summer of 2017, the Pollak Library was on a system called Millennium. As of summer 2017, all twenty-three CSU libraries went live on a new system called Alma. The change in the library system has an impact on the collections data, which will be addressed later in the conversation, and could be one of the main reasons for some of the discrepancies between the collections data up to 2016 and data after 2017. When library systems change, the data fields, and the data values may change to adjust to the new systems. Therefore, it can become difficult to perform a thorough historical analysis depending on how the data migrated over the years and into different systems.

A search in Millennium prior to going live with Alma in the summer of 2017 for Vietnam as the topic retrieved 3,505 hits, and for Vietnamese language resources, 94 hits. Of the 3,505 titles, most of the results were English language resources about the Vietnam War. Out of the 94 Vietnamese language titles, 51 were added between 1957 and 2000, 23 between 2001 and 2010, and 20 between 2011 and 2016. The more recent additions to the

Vietnamese language collection were results of grants to expand the collection in order to supplement the Vietnamese program's growth.

The Pollak Library was able to acquire a small number of materials for the bilingual Vietnamese education track in the fiscal year (FY) of 2014–2015 through a Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant, working closely with the faculty member who received the grant. In FY 2015–2016, through one-time funding from the Emeriti of CSUF, the Vietnamese language collection was able to grow modestly. In FY 2016–2017, the authors, along with Dr. Sarah Grant from the Anthropology department, won one of the Patrons of the Library Collections Grants and further supplemented some of the resources requested by teaching faculty members. The aim of the Patrons Collections Grant was to create opportunities for collaboration between the faculty and the Pollak Library to enhance the library's collection that supported the curriculum or research interests of faculty members. The Patrons of the Library Collections Grants proposal, titled "Growing the Vietnamese Language Collection," was ranked the highest by the review committee due to the realization that the grant would support filling a significant gap in the collection with a growing program.

There was, however, very little to zero demonstrated usage of the Vietnamese language materials in Millennium. In Alma, many Vietnamese language titles continued to have zero to little usage, with some exceptions on core and reference works within the Library of Congress Classification PL4371–4379 ranges receiving attention from users. Even the interlibrary loan (ILL) statistics of the titles lent to other institutions between 2002 and 2020 indicated for Vietnamese language resources, only twelve requests were fulfilled in eighteen years by CSUF. Although the lack of circulation statistics is not the sole indicator of disinterest in these resources, as these materials could have been used without being checked out or Vietnamese language resources needs fulfilled through other means, the low documented usage of the collections contributed to an attempt to more closely study the needs of the population being served as well as how to prioritize collecting for this area.

A search in Alma in February of 2021 showed that on the topic of Vietnam, there are 3,998 resources, and 460 resources for the Vietnamese language materials. There could be a number of interpretations about the sudden rise of available Vietnamese language resources, which increased from 94 in 2017 to 460 in 2021. One of the contributing factors could be that without the language expertise at the Pollak Library to catalog the resources, the Vietnamese resources' records in the library system remained stagnant until the consortial migration forced an update to the bibliographic information when the consortial migration took place and refreshed stale versions of the bibliographic records in Alma. Also since 2017, Alma has allowed automatic updates to bibliographic records where CSUF has its holdings attached in OCLC. This helps to understand that as the crowdsourced OCLC environment improves the bibliographic record quality, the automatic updates refresh the bibliographic records and improve the reporting functionality in Alma's analytics.

The dramatic uptick in the number of resources is out of step with the low usage of the Vietnamese language collection in general, which has remained consistent pre-2016 and post-2017 after the system migration. The low demand for Vietnamese language resources

at CSUF overall is also aligned with the demand for resources not locally available through ILL. Comparing the demand of CSUF users for Vietnamese language resources from 2009 to 2016, there were only thirty-four ILL requests during this period, mostly from graduate students and faculty members. From 2017 to 2020, there were only eleven ILL requests total for Vietnamese language resources, with the vast majority of the requests during this period being from one of the authors of the present study.

Although the Vietnamese language resources are growing, the library collection needs to continue to evolve to support future directions. The past collection development efforts for Vietnamese resources resided with a single individual in MLL, and the library supported the selections without question. However, in order to better understand how to build a language collection that will be utilized not only by faculty but also by the students and the community as part of the mission of public institutions, more of the user base needs to be studied and their needs better understood, especially where there is an overlap between the students and community members.

Diaspora, Anticommunism, and Free Speech

The history of the largest Vietnamese diaspora, Little Saigon in Southern California, is complicated. The creation and existence of this community is entangled in conflicting memories of the Vietnam War and the politics of refugee rescue. The Vietnamese immigrants, like many other Asian American populations, have had the invisible burden of the model minority myth.²⁰ The Vietnamese diaspora, as political refugees at the end of the Vietnam War, carried an additional burden: a moral debt that demands perfection in exchange for America's rescue of them from communism. The good refugees, who are hard-working, self-reliant, family-oriented, and anticommunist, made a striking contrast to an impoverished communist homeland. This distinction provided Americans with a comforting antidote to the humiliation of losing the Vietnam War. The good refugees affirmed that capitalism is superior to communism and that the people of South Vietnam were worth fighting for.²¹ In the over four decades since the war, many Vietnamese refugees have established themselves as middle-class entrepreneurs, and their success is marked by the creation of the ethnic enclave in Little Saigon.

The push for assimilation came to an unexpected turn in 1996 when the US and Vietnam normalized their bilateral relationship after Vietnam initiated economic reform in 1986 that opened its market to global neoliberalism. Vietnamese immigrants understood that a reconciliation between Vietnam and the US meant an end to refugee admission as well as US's challenge to the communists' version of the Vietnam War. One final war-related refugee program, partly at Hanoi's request, was the Humanitarian Operation (HO) in the 1990s. This program granted refugee status to former South Vietnamese who had been detained in reeducation camps for at least three years. Nearly one hundred former political prisoners became American citizens under HO, and by 2000, former prisoners accounted for one out of every six Vietnamese Americans.²² This new wave of refugees

did not undergo the terrible suffering at sea that the boat people endured. However, they experienced firsthand the brutality of the communist regime in the reeducation camps. Their arrival in Little Saigon assured that anticommunism is the hallmark of the Vietnamese diaspora to distinguish themselves from the homeland.²³

As the result of these waves of immigration, anticommunism has become the nexus of the Vietnamese refugee identity. Anticommunism is not only a political stance but also a “disciplinary cultural practice.”²⁴ It is a way to preserve the history of South Vietnam, a lost country, against the historical version of Hanoi as well as mainstream America, especially after the normalization between Vietnam and the US. Anticommunism serves as a tool to educate and socialize young Vietnamese Americans about the history and culture of South Vietnam.²⁵ Aguilar-San Juan argues that anticommunism for Vietnamese Americans is an apparatus to reinforce the boundaries of the community: social, political, and spatial.²⁶ Collet and Furuya call this practice “Saigon nationalism,” in which Little Saigon is not only a place of comfort away from home but also a semi-sovereign alternative to the country of origin.²⁷

The notion that there is only one correct way to understand the history of South Vietnam strictly limits the freedom of expression in Little Saigon. Valverde points out the irony that political censorship among Vietnamese Americans is no different from that in the homeland, which is constantly subjected to criticism from the diaspora.²⁸ Viet Thanh Nguyen, perhaps the most famous Vietnamese American scholar, who won the Pulitzer for one of his novels, claims that “because of political pressure and filial piety, there has been no true freedom of speech in the Vietnamese American community.”²⁹ Anticommunism and censorship are inherently intertwined with the political identity of Vietnamese refugees, and their legacies are deeply personal and painful to many Vietnamese immigrants who lost everything—their country, their families, and their identities—after the Vietnam War. As one Vietnamese refugee succinctly argues, freedom of speech is not free.³⁰

CSUF, Pollak Library, and Little Saigon

The CSU’s public-facing mission to serve the local community poses some challenges for the Pollak Library to develop its Vietnamese collection because of the specific history of Little Saigon. First and foremost, the size and resources of Little Saigon make it a self-sustaining community. Nguyen remarked that Vietnamese Americans, especially those in Southern California, enjoy a demographic luxury not available to most other ethnic groups across the globe: a refugee majority.³¹ Indeed, Little Saigon plays an incredible role in helping refugees mitigate the psychological trauma, providing alternative economic opportunities and facilitating cultural preservation.³² In Little Saigon exists an alternative Vietnamese nation replete with Vietnamese culture and memory through signs, symbols, language, food, artifacts, and Buddhist temples, to the extent that one does not need to speak English to live there comfortably. The community does not need external help to preserve its own culture. Vietnamese Americans have almost 150 media outlets in radio,

television, and newspapers, most of which are located in Little Saigon, as well as entertainment companies that for years set the standards for entertainment in the homeland.³³ They have their own Institute of Vietnam Studies (Viện Việt Học) and publishing houses.³⁴ Given these immense resources and concentration of influence in Little Saigon, it is not surprising that the library collection data demonstrated a serious lack of interest in Vietnamese language resources at the Pollak Library or even in public libraries.³⁵

The difference in population size might explain the disinterest in Vietnamese resources in Southern California libraries compared to the success in Denver at DPL. Started with a \$5,000 grant to buy Vietnamese materials by the Library Service and Construction Act in 1987, twenty years later DPL had more than 5,000 items in the language with a circulation of 4,800 per month.³⁶ The most popular items borrowed from DPL were music and videos that were produced in Southern California where Vietnamese Americans could buy tickets and attend the live shows. Little Saigon is the mecca of overseas Vietnamese culture that is exported to other cities, states, and countries.

The second primary concern for the Vietnamese language collection at the Pollak Library is getting materials from Vietnam due to the community's anticommunist stance. Political censorship and its impact on academic freedom among Vietnamese Americans has posed major challenges for scholars in the US. For example, the Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, was the target of many lawsuits and protests by Vietnamese Americans for dealing with writers and poets in Vietnam.³⁷ When the Vietnamese American Arts and Letters Association (VAALA) opened an exhibit in Little Saigon in 2009 called *F.O.B. II: Art Speaks*, it was cancelled due to protests over a controversial image of Ho Chi Minh and the mainland's flag.³⁸ The Vietnamese community is also distrustful of scholarship coming out of Vietnam because "they [Hanoi government] do not want future generations to know the truth about the Vietnamese refugees."³⁹ The owner of the Tự Lực Bookstore once expressed to one of the authors during an in-person visit in 2017 that he read every book he bought to ensure there was no procommunist propaganda. In a similar vein, after being hired, the other author was cautioned by colleagues to be careful about course content related to communism. Academic freedom is one of the core tenets of higher education in the US, and the Vietnamese American community's proclivity toward censorship in relation to communism makes it difficult to acquire certain materials needed to have well-informed knowledge about Vietnam, its culture, and its history.

Together, the immense cultural resources and staunch anticommunism in Little Saigon mean that political, not cultural or educational, causes are of utmost importance to this diaspora community, especially when engaging with those outside the immediate community. When a Socialist Republic of Vietnam flag was on display during graduation in 2004 at CSUF, the Vietnamese community did not hesitate to protest, demonstrating a strong drive to get politically involved with CSUF to express the diaspora's political censorship stance.⁴⁰ The lack of cultural and pedagogical engagement by the inhabitants of Little Saigon is reflected in the low usage of the Vietnamese collection at Pollak Library despite the library's efforts to serve this particular community.

Faculty and Library Collaboration

Despite the lack of demonstrated need by the Vietnamese diaspora for Vietnamese language resources, there is still a curricular need at CSUF for these resources. Teaching faculty members are important constituents who utilize library resources themselves, incorporate resources into their curricula, and have firsthand access to student needs. In order to serve the students enrolled in the Vietnamese program, there needs to be a tighter collaboration between the library and faculty. Up to now, the Pollak Library did not have the funds to properly support a new faculty member's curriculum building, and there was not a consistent outreach program experience for teaching faculty members to become aware of the available library services. Also, unfortunately, when there was federal funding associated with the establishment of the Vietnamese minor, there was not yet a full-time faculty member serving as a Vietnamese program coordinator to fully give voice to the program. The chair of the MLL department, who coordinated the Spanish program, made the initial decisions on the Vietnamese curriculum support materials without a clear understanding of the program's needs. Now that the program has had a faculty member provide stable guidance on the growth of the program for almost five years, there is more awareness of the program's needs, which paves the way for more targeted efforts to strategize on the collection building in collaboration with the library.

For pedagogical purposes, there is a need for language materials. Alba argues that immigrant communities follow a similar path of language retention.⁴¹ The first generation prefers to speak their native language and learns enough English to conduct basic social transactions. The second generation, grown up in households where native language is used, can understand some amount of the native language. However, they prefer to use English in their everyday life and in conversation with adults who speak to them in the native language. According to Alba, 80 percent of the third Vietnamese generation speaks only English,⁴² and it is the third generation, that constitutes the bulk of the generation currently attending CSUF. A large number of Vietnamese heritage students are interested in learning the language, and the beginning Vietnamese courses are almost always full every semester. In order to better serve the students and faculty teaching Vietnamese, a more diverse array of language resources in different formats, such as streaming media, graphic novels, children's books, and audio materials, are required in addition to textbooks to make language learning more stimulating and relevant.

Similarly, upper-level content classes need more books and movies, preferably in electronic format, to supplement course learning. It has been common practice for teaching faculty to pay out of pocket or rely on the MLL department's funding to purchase DVDs for instructional support. Moreover, while the diasporic community has its own version of Vietnamese history and culture sanctioned through an anticommunist lens, teaching faculty need access to materials from multiple viewpoints and opinions from a pedagogical standpoint. Often, these types of materials cannot be obtained through local vendors, especially in light of the anticommunist agenda in Little Saigon, and must be borrowed through ILL or sourced directly from mainland Vietnam. Although the neighboring Vietnamese American community has expressed that there is not really a need for Vietnamese

library materials through the low demand for and use of the resources, educators and libraries must still collaborate to create a more purposeful collection that is utilized and activated, targeting the needs of the users.

Surveying Students

Up to this point, the biggest drivers for Vietnamese collection building were the library and teaching faculty. While students are also one of the main target audiences for the collection, they have not had the opportunity to make their voices heard in the collections-building process. The authors hypothesized based on the minimal library use that the students, like the Vietnamese diaspora community, have low need of the Vietnamese language collections. In order to test this assumption, a survey instrument was designed to poll the students on their library and library collections usage.

An anonymous online survey administered through Qualtrics was distributed to students enrolled in the Vietnamese program at CSUF in the 2020–2021 academic year.⁴³ A total of eighty-three students in lower-level language classes and upper-level content classes participated in the survey. The students who took the survey majored in a very wide range of disciplines, from social sciences (psychology, communications, linguistics, criminal justice, anthropology), STEM (engineering, biochemistry), business (accounting, finance), and arts (graphic design) to public health (kinesiology, public health). Sixty-six of the respondents are Southern California residents; six are in-state students but not local; and eleven are out-of-state or international students. Three-quarters of the students have used public libraries before enrolling at CSUF, and only twenty-three (28%) are still currently using them. Three-quarters did not use public libraries for Vietnamese materials, while those who did mostly borrowed Vietnamese language materials. When it comes to the use of Pollak Library, the results were predictable: seventy-one (86%) never used the Pollak Library before their enrollment, and 42 percent are using the library now; sixty-three students (76%) do not use the Vietnamese collection at Pollak at all. Among those who checked out Vietnamese materials, fourteen (17%) students used language materials and eight (10%) used subject or content materials for their academic courses. Most students do not use the Vietnamese collection for personal or professional purposes.

The reasons students cited for not using the Vietnamese collection at the Pollak Library can be categorized into four groupings: COVID restriction (14%), distance (14%), no need (either professor provided all the course materials or they found what they need from family and online) (75%), and lack of awareness that the collection exists (24%). When asked how the library collection can serve their needs better, most students responded with *none* or *n/a*. Some other suggestions included more promotion of the collection, more variety in the collection, and more resources available online so that they can be accessed remotely.

Results from the survey clearly showed that the Vietnamese collection does not meet the needs of its student constituents or, more importantly, might be even irrelevant to their needs. The “no need” responses, especially with content or subject materials, that dominated the survey reinforced the authors’ argument that Vietnamese Americans in

Southern California do not need to resort to libraries, neither public nor CSUF's Pollak Library, to access cultural content that is readily available in Little Saigon. Another possible explanation for this indifference to the Vietnamese collection at CSUF is that the university is not a research university and the Vietnamese program at CSUF is still a minor. In the Vietnamese program, the majority of course offerings are language classes while upper-level courses stop at the 300-level.⁴⁴ CSUF does not have an Asian Studies major, but has a BA in ethnic studies with a concentration in Asian American Studies. Therefore, there is little requirement for students to do in-depth research on Vietnamese topics. Students from language courses indicated in the survey that they will benefit from more language textbooks, but the Vietnamese language collection is very limited and the Pollak Library does not generally purchase textbooks as a policy.⁴⁵ CSUF students often come from working-class backgrounds, and it would serve them and their academic success if they can access required textbooks via the library or are assigned resources that are affordable learning solutions instead of having to buy them. The lack of availability and lack of access through the Pollak Library to e-textbooks in Vietnamese is another cause for the low use of the collection, as reinforced by the survey of students. CSUs have a large-scale Affordable Learning Solutions initiative, but Pollak Library is at the time of writing, not able to support all disciplines at scale.

Conclusion

Most institutions have limitations on what they are able to collect for a variety of reasons, such as budget or sourcing, and the Pollak Library is no exception. In order to continue growing the collection along with the Vietnamese curriculum, the library needs to seize opportunities to insert itself into the larger campus culture of applying for grants and intensifying closer collaboration with teaching faculty for closer alignment of outreach and marketing of library resources and services. As faculty members develop a more nuanced understanding of the library as not only an entity housing resources but also an active partner in supporting student success, there will be more possibilities to extend the level of collaboration. The library reciprocally needs to be more intentional, thoughtful, inclusive, pluralistic, responsive, and reflective in the collection development strategy to support different types of communities.

The Vietnamese collection development efforts up to now have focused on working closely with the teaching faculty to fulfill their requests. However, with the opportunities to receive feedback from the students who sometimes double as part of the nearby Vietnamese diaspora community, there are possibilities to incorporate the voices of constituents who have not yet been tapped about their needs. There are ways to build the collection with faculty members to create a more reflective collection, which can be responsive to the user needs, especially those of students and community members. Marketing the collections, as well as creating a more consistent outreach program experience for teaching faculty members to become aware of the available library services and collections, will fuel future use and engagements. Including more diverse content and formats would also further the use of collections.

Although the local Vietnamese community population has largely stated a sense of disengagement through actions when it comes to the campus activities, except in relation to anticommunism, perhaps it is best to focus on the pedagogical needs as well as popular demands for different formats for different language levels in order to encourage students to explore the Vietnamese language through different types of media. The exploration of the history of the Vietnamese diaspora in Little Saigon provided a bit more context for why the Vietnamese language collection is not actively being used. The missing student voices were supplemented through the survey. The survey of students enrolled in Vietnamese courses at CSUF demonstrates that lack of use can overshadow the efforts that go into building library collections. But the hope is to enrich the understanding of these types of variables to better support the constituents as well as to create a better strategy to build collections that are needed and used. Looking toward the future, there should be ongoing collaboration between the Pollak Library's collection development team and the patrons it aims to serve through an active collections assessment program. Such an endeavor can include partnership with instructors in the Vietnamese program as well as continued engagement with the students, the campus community, and the local community. The survey of the students was the first step in determining how better to support the student population that at times doubles as the public that is in the scope of the community the CSUF serves. A detailed survey exploring their needs might be a future direction to consider to gain understanding of not only the needs but also the unique conditions in continuing to build a partnership with the diaspora population.

It is not expected that the nature of the student survey or this book chapter will change the course of funding allocations at the Pollak Library, but it is hoped that this study will inspire more conversations about how best to serve this particular community through the library collections. Although for the purposes of the chapter, the Pollak Library's current collection development librarian stated that the library is "unable to retrieve Primo searches pertaining to Vietnam as [the library] do[es] not track patron searches,"⁴⁶ if possible, an analysis of the list of searches not tied to the patron on the discovery system to find out what users are searching for, or searches with zero results, could also be illuminating. There are ways to render the search data entirely anonymous by removing all identifying information from the data and completely disassociating any links between the searches and patrons through reviewing the search logs.

The collection strategy at the Pollak Library up to now has been to respond to faculty requests, but taking a more proactive approach through active outreach with faculty, students, community members, and partners about the possibilities would publicize the collections and services that currently exist. One of the future recommendations is to build on the idea of increasing partnerships with the local public libraries and a research university to more strategically divvy up the collecting and services. The University of California, Irvine, another neighbor within Orange County, is the steward of the Southeast Asian Archive (SEAA),⁴⁷ which makes primary and secondary resources documenting the history of the Southeast Asian diaspora available and accessible for research. SEAA was actively established through the advocacy and contributions of the local Vietnamese refugee community.⁴⁸ Partnering with entities such as SEAA will complement and strengthen

regional holdings, resulting in a more streamlined use of existing resources for all parties involved. There is tremendous potential in forging new community partnerships in this way and perhaps using collection development as the bridge to connections. With the backdrop of the state of California and the CSUs adopting ethnic studies curriculum,⁴⁹ it is not enough to teach the content and the subject areas but also to teach the languages that make the various cultures, countries, and communities unique and distinctive. In some cases, that means working directly with the communities that are being discussed in ethnic studies courses.

The Pollak Library has been operating under the assumption that in order to support a newly developing Vietnamese curriculum, a library collection is needed. However, the authors have discovered, to the contrary, that due to the vastness of the local Vietnamese American community, library resources at the Pollak Library are perhaps not needed as much as anticipated. The low usage of the collection as well as low demand for Vietnamese language materials and the student surveys reinforced that it is not enough to just build a collection and hope the users use it. It is not a failure on the part of a library to not have a collection that is not going to get used, but this does pose a more important question of why build a collection that is not going to get used? In order to address this larger question, there needs to be a continued understanding of the local and regional needs moving forward.

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APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What is your age (for consent purposes)?
 - ☐ Under 18
 - ☐ 18 or older
2. What is your major?
[Free Text]
3. Are you an international or out-of-state student?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
4. If you are not an international or out-of-state student, are you a resident of Southern California?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
5. Have you used public libraries (e.g., city libraries, county libraries) before enrolling at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF)?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
6. Do you currently use public libraries (e.g., city libraries, county libraries)?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
7. Have you used CSUF's Pollak Library before enrolling at CSUF?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
8. Do you currently use the Pollak Library?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
9. Do you currently use public libraries' collections for the following (please check all that apply)?
 - ☐ Vietnamese language materials for academic courses
 - ☐ Vietnamese subject/content materials for academic courses
 - ☐ Vietnamese language materials for personal or professional purposes
 - ☐ Vietnamese subject/content materials for personal or professional purposes
 - ☐ I do not use public libraries' collections for Vietnamese materials
10. Do you currently use the Pollak Library's collections for the following (please check all that apply)?
 - ☐ Vietnamese language materials for academic courses
 - ☐ Vietnamese subject/content materials for academic courses
 - ☐ Vietnamese language materials for personal or professional purposes
 - ☐ Vietnamese subject/content materials for personal or professional purposes
 - ☐ I do not use the Pollak Library's collections for Vietnamese materials

11. If you do not currently use the Pollak Library's collections for Vietnamese materials (e.g., academic, professional, or personal), please explain why not.
[Free Text]
12. How can the Pollak Library's Vietnamese collection better serve your needs?
[Free Text]

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